I: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

584 mats, drinking, eating, etc. we should say : This rite is also, on the part of the diminished group, a means of asserting its importance, of saving its dignity. But the boys do the same thing on their visit. They maintain the same disdainful attitude... This certainly arises from the fact that the two social groups look upon each other with some distrust, not yet being fully acquainted, and consequently observing a mutual reserve. But further information and a closer comparative study of Thonga rites enables me to give still another explanation.

561 431 The term employed to designate this rite is *kunga*. This verb is of Ngoni (Zulu) origin. Used in a general way, it means to remit a present to a chief who has sent his emissaries to claim it. The chief "*kungisa*," viz. orders to kunga. In its ritual sense, it means to give a present to a person who refuses to do something for ritual reasons. The old Thonga expression is *alula*. This word is the reversive derivative of the verb *ala*, to refuse ; it therefore means to remove the refusal, to overcome it, to cause somebody to yield. The Kunga rite is performed on at least five different occasions : 1) for the circumcised boy on the day when he is received into the community of adults (page 93) ; 2) for the girl who has passed through the khomba initiation ; 3) for the boy who has wooed a girl, when he pays his official visit to her and to her family, and for the girl, when she returns the visit with her maids, but especially when she goes to the domicile of her husband and thus enters the married state ; 4) for the first-born child ; 5) for the woman who has lost many children and consequently is in a state of bereavement (bowumba) when she again gives birth to a child. In all these cases, the person concerned passes from one condition to another ; the circumcised from the childish to the adult stage, the suitor and his bride from the unmarried to the married state, the woman who has had her first child from the state of womanhood to that of motherhood and the bereaved woman from the state of bereavement to the normal position of a mother carrying a child on her shoulders. And here we meet with the old Bantu conception of life. This passage, in the evolution of human life, is fraught with danger. The person concerned stands on the defensive. He or she refuses to speak, to look at other people, to enter their village, or, in the case of the newly married girl, to perform her conjugal duty. Those who wish them to accept their new condition must persuade them to do so by giving them presents, generally presents of little importance, a wire bracelet, a small coin, etc. This will remove the danger.

This rite, which might be called a *defensive rite*, is therefore certainly

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

561 a rite of passage and this is also proved by the fact that the money or the
431 bracelets given to the persons concerned do not remain their property. As regards the circumcised, they remit them to the chief, and the chief distributes them to the old women who are no longer able to bear children. The girl who has passed through the khomba gives them to her adopted mother, who will use them in the same way. All the money remitted to the bride will go to the master of the village, for the old women and the children. *Married people must have no share in it,* as these presents are taboo. Why ? Because they are connected with a passage, and people who have sexual relations are considered as increasing the dangers connected with these critical phases of human development, when the heart is troubled by a half-conscious fear of a new and unknown future. Amongst civilised people who have reached the era of individualism, these fears find their expression in songs and poetry. In the communistic society they express themselves by means of rites.

* * *

591 Here are some answers to the questions of Professor Frazer on
587 marriage.
611 A man always brings his wife to his own home. This is the *tlhoma*, and it is a law. It is taboo for him to go and live with his parents-in- law, at any rate when he marries his first wife. In the course of time, when the children have grown up, when the *bukoŋwana*, viz. the relations with parents-in-law, are of old standing, a man can go and live in his wife's village (See Part II). Another case in which this can be done is when a widow refuses to marry the man who legally inherits her, and gives herself to a stranger, a man of Inhambane, for instance. He does not pay the lobolo, and lives with her in her village ; but the children born of that union will belong to the family of the deceased husband.

585 There is no preparation for marriage amongst the Thongas by fasting, bleeding or keeping awake the night before. No corn or rice is thrown at the bridal pair. The bride or bridegroom is never represented at the marriage by a proxy or dummy. Conjugal relations begin immediately after marriage (see page 113), but the wife does not possess her home and her kitchen for the first year ; during that period she must cook for her mother-in-law.

583 There are no occasions on which men exchange their wives.
See practical conclusions on Marriage Rites at the end of Vol. I.

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
316 men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
834 her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
576 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding hers at right angles. "Then you begin to talk..."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
431 In the Maputju clan, the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

606 of its meat with all his relatives-in-law. Then both will be
431 allowed to eat together. Until that present was made, it would
376 have been impossible. In this clan, a future son-in-law does not eat at all with his bakoñwana until the marriage is concluded, and this rule is sometimes observed till he has given "the ox for communicating together." Amongst the Zulus it is said that a mother-in-law will never eat with her daughter's husband. In the Khosa clan the custom of lessening the avoidance taboo by offering a present to the mother-in-law also exists. The son-in-law will one day bring a plate of food to her with his gift put on top of it. She will accept it and eat together with him. Then it will be possible for these two persons to "djungulisana" i. e. to tell each other the news of the day when visiting each other's village. But when this monotonous recital is finished and concluded, as is customary, by clapping both hands, this must be done with care, and not in a hurried fashion, as when speaking to an ordinary person, but slowly and respectfully.

115 What is the reason of this extraordinary conduct of the son-in-law
606 towards his wife's mother ? The Khosa Native who gave me this last
835 information said : "A wise man will carefully observe the bukoñwana rules, because, if he hurts his parents-in-law by infringing them, they will not give him his tinamu as wives." This is true, but the same may be said of all the taboos of the bukoñwana, and the mother-in-law is not the principal person to be consulted on the question. Another more profound reason was once alluded to by an old Thonga, of Spelonken, Abraham Mabanyisi, who said to me : "I fear my mother-in-law because I shall never marry her : Such a thing has never been seen." This statement has been confirmed since by information gathered in the Maputju clan. Notice the almost reflex action of the mother-in-law in covering her breasts when she sees her son-in-law coming unexpectedly. It shows that there is a sexual element in the behaviour of the woman and also in that of the man, who hides his face in order not to see her in her half nakedness. Dr. Rivers, who has met exactly the same rites of avoidance amongst the Melanesians, supposes that they are dictated by a more or less unconscious desire on the part of both these persons to fight against the temptation to have sexual relations with each other. Bantus also, in the course of the evolution of the family, have come to the deep conviction that such intercourse is bad and must

604 womb, the uterus ; this consists not only of that organ, but of the
585 whole belly, from the sternum to the hind legs ; the bride's mother eats the *mbata* and *khondjo*, viz. the extremity of the spine (Mboza).

585 On the day of hlomisa, when the bride is led to her husband's
431 village, her maternal relatives receive a special gift, a young cow called *mubya wa mana wa yena*, i. e. the skin in which her mother carried her on her shoulders when she was a baby. This cow will be sent to the family when the first and the third daughter marry. In the case of a second and fourth girl, the nyimba alone is sent.

585 In the *equipment of the bride*, the mother's relatives provide
604 her with a hoe, with fat to anoint her body, with a mat and clothing and sometimes with bracelets. The paternal aunt (hahana) does not give anything, neither does the paternal uncle, the latter only helping the father occasionally. Should the mother's relatives not fulfil this duty of providing part of the trousseau, next time they will not be given the *nyimba* to which they were entitled (Viguet).

593 But the most characteristic prerogative of the bamalume or
602 bakokwana, is *their special right of intercession* on behalf of the
604 uterine nephews. In fact, as Mankhelu said in his picturesque language, "as regards sacrifices (timhamba), the mother's relatives mostly perform them. They are the stem. My father is the stem as regards the oxen, but my mother is the true stem ; she is the god ; she makes me grow. Should she die when I am an infant, I shall not live. The village of my mother is as the home of the gods (ka mamana hi ko psikwembyen)." Simeon Gana added : "We have the special charge of sacrificing for our batukulu ; our sons also are priests to them, and can officiate in our place, even should they be younger than our batukulu. That is the reason why we do not marry them. We are their elders (bakulu)." Of course the bones will always be consulted and they will tell if a sacrifice must be offered to the gods of the mother or to those of the father, but a kokwane will preferably be called upon to sacrifice for a sick child. (See Part VI. Chap. II, II.)

604 In the ceremonies following death, especially in the feast of
611 the mourning beer (page 164), the malume will be the officiating person and squeeze the *psanyi* over his batukulu to cleanse them.

A last right possessed by the malume is that *of raising his village*